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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

**STANDING JOINT TASK FORCES IN THE 21ST CENTURY:
COMBAT MULTIPLIER OR FORCE DEGRADER**

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ABSTRACT (MAXIMUM 200 WORDS) THIS ESSAY EXAMINES THE VALIDITY IN ESTABLISHING STANDING JOINT TASK FORCES (SJTF) IN ORDER TO DEVELOP NEW CONCEPTS TO EXPLOIT U.S. ASYMMETRIC MILITARY ADVANTAGES AND JOINT FORCE SYNERGIES AS OUTLINED IN THE 2001 QDR. NUMEROUS ATTEMPTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO CREATE A GLOBALLY FOCUSED SJTF AND MOST HAVE PROVEN TO BE COSTLY IN MANPOWER AND RESOURCES YET RICH WITH SHORTFALLS. ULTIMATELY, NONE HAVE PROVIDED THE CINCS WITH ANY SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN WARFIGHTING EFFECTIVENESS. THE CRITICAL SHORTFALL THAT EXISTS IN RAPID RESPONSE OF A JTF LIES IN THE REQUIREMENT TO FORM A JTF HEADQUARTERS WHEN A CRISIS HAPPENS, NOT WITH PROVIDING REQUISITE FORCES. THE ASYMMETRIC ENVIRONMENT THAT THE U.S. FACES SUGGESTS THAT CINCS MUST HAVE FLEXIBLE OPTIONS AVAILABLE. CREATION OF A SJTF DOES NOT AFFORD THAT FLEXIBILITY BECAUSE IT WOULD TIE UP LIMITED RESOURCES THAT CANNOT POSSIBLY PREPARE TO RESPOND ACROSS THE SPECTRUM OF CONFLICT NOR DEVELOP REGIONAL SITUATION AWARENESS NECESSARY TO EFFECTIVELY EMPLOY FORCES WHEN REQUIRED. THEREFORE, THE DOD DOES NOT NEED TO CREATE SJTFs. THE DOD DOES NEED TO DEVELOP REGIONALLY FOCUSED STANDING JOINT TASK FORCE HEADQUARTERS (SJTFHQs). THESE SJTFHQs WILL SERVE TO ELIMINATE THE AD HOC NATURE OF CREATING A JTFHQ AT THE CRITICAL TIME OF CRISIS DEVELOPMENT.		
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: STANDING JOINT TASK FORCES IN THE 21ST CENTURY:
COMBAT MULTIPLIER OR FORCE DEGRADER

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Thesis: This essay examines the validity in establishing Standing Joint Task Forces (SJTF) in order to develop new concepts to exploit U.S. asymmetric military advantages and joint force synergies as outlined in the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review.

Discussion:

1. The concept of a Standing Joint Task Force is not new within the United States Department of Defense (DOD). Numerous attempts have been made to create a globally focused SJTF and most have proven to be costly in manpower and resources yet rich with shortfalls. Ultimately, none have provided the combatant commander in chiefs (CINCs) with any substantial increase in warfighting effectiveness.
2. The critical shortfall that currently exists in rapid response of a Joint Task Force lies in the requirement to form a Joint Task Force Headquarters when a crisis happens, not with providing requisite forces. There seems to be unanimity with the service chiefs and CINCs that SJTFs are unnecessary. Their concerns are that costs and disadvantages of creating a SJTF simply do not justify the potential limited benefits.

Conclusion:

1. The very nature of the asymmetric environment that the United States faces today suggests that CINCs must have flexible options available. Creation of a SJTF does not afford that flexibility because it would tie up limited resources that cannot possibly prepare to respond across the spectrum of conflict nor develop regional situation awareness necessary to effectively employ forces when required. Therefore, The DOD does not need to create SJTFs.
2. The DOD does need to develop regionally focused Standing Joint Task Force Headquarters (SJTFHQs). These SJTFHQs will

serve to eliminate the ad hoc nature of creating a JTFHQ at the critical time of crisis development.

METHODOLOGY

This essay reviews Secretary of Defense Policy that recommends examining options for establishing Standing Joint Task Forces (SJTFS) in order to develop new concepts to exploit U.S. asymmetric military advantages and joint force synergies. Chapter one is the introduction and briefly explains the limitations associated with the creation of SJTFS. The second chapter provides a doctrinal description of the current Joint Task Force concept, highlighting key points required for the focus of this paper. Additionally, chapter two lists current SJTFS. The third chapter presents a historical review of attempts to create SJTFS within the United States military. The fourth chapter provides insight from the author's participation in the Military Organization and Arrangements Integrated Process Team (MO&A IPT) during the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), highlighting services and CINCs thoughts on creation of SJTFS and Standing Joint Task Force Headquarters (SJTFHQs). The fifth chapter addresses the issue that creation of SJTFS will not correct the perceived and identified shortfalls that currently exist when forming a Joint Task Force. More importantly, it points out that establishing regionally focused SJTFHQs is the more

efficient option. The sixth chapter provides recommendations for change and concluding thoughts.

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WHAT WE NEED IS STANDING JOINT TASK FORCE HEADQUARTERS (JTF-HQ) WITH CAPABILITIES THAT ALLOW OUR JOINT WARFIGHTERS TO TAKE CHARGE OF A FLEXIBLE RANGE OF SERVICE AND FUNCTIONAL SUBORDINATE UNITS DEPENDING ON THE SITUATION. THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO BUILD AND RETAIN THE ADAPTIVE SKILLS AND TEAMWORK OF A COHESIVE JOINT STAFF.

CINCPAC

INTRODUCTION

The 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) recommended that the Department of Defense look into the development of a Standing Joint Task Force (SJTF) to be able to more rapidly respond to an emerging crisis. Although the common theme of the QDR was "transformation" of the United States military, the concept of a Standing Joint Task Force is not a new concept within the Department of Defense. It has just resurfaced with the wave of the need to "transform the military" that is prevalent in the new Administration. Although there is little doubt, both within the military and throughout the defense community, that reforms need to take place and a reevaluation and investment into future capabilities must occur, many of the initiatives addressed in the QDR are merely ideas without the benefit of disciplined scrutiny. Failure to clearly articulate the "Roadmap for Transformation", coupled with a valid investment program, will result in wasted valuable national resources. Failure

to look at the history of creating unsuccessful Joint Task Forces, identifying the main hurdles to rapid deployment of military force, and the expanding uncertainties that our country may face in the asymmetric environment that the United States operates in, will result in squandering the resources of time, money, and people with no significant gains.

The concept of a Standing Joint Task Force is not new within the United States Department of Defense. Numerous attempts have been made in the past to create a globally focused SJTF and most have proven to be costly in manpower and resources yet rich with shortfalls. Ultimately, none have provided the combatant commander in chiefs (CINCs) with any substantial increase in warfighting effectiveness. The critical shortfall that currently exists in rapid response of a Joint Task Force lies in the requirement to form a Joint Task Force Headquarters when a crisis happens, not with providing requisite forces. This fact alone has created unanimity amongst the service chiefs and CINCs that SJTFs are unnecessary.¹ Their concerns are that costs and disadvantages of creating a SJTF simply do not justify the potential limited benefits. The very nature of the asymmetric

¹ Observations of the author while serving as a member of the MO&A IPT during the 2001 QDR.

environment that the United States faces today suggests that the president must have flexible options available. Creation of a SJTF does not afford that flexibility because it would tie up limited resources that cannot possibly prepare to respond across the spectrum of conflict nor develop regional situation awareness necessary to effectively employ forces when required. Cohesive, regionally focused Standing Joint Task Forces Headquarters will, however, allow the joint force to more rapidly respond to an emerging crisis.

DESCRIPTION OF JOINT TASK FORCES

Joint Pub 0-2 and Joint Pub 5-00.2 provide the doctrinal information on the formation and purpose of Joint Task Forces (JTF). In order to establish the basis of what a JTF is, the key points must be pointed out. A JTF is a joint force that is constituted and so designated by a JTF establishing authority. This establishing authority may be the Secretary of Defense, a commander of a combatant command, subordinate unified command, or existing JTF. A JTF is normally "established on a geographical area or functional basis when the mission has a specific limited objective and does not require overall centralized control of logistics."² Furthermore, "a Joint Task Force is dissolved by the proper

² Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Pub 5-00.2, *Joint Task Force Planning Guidance and Procedures* (Washington, DC: GPO, 13 January 1999), I-1.

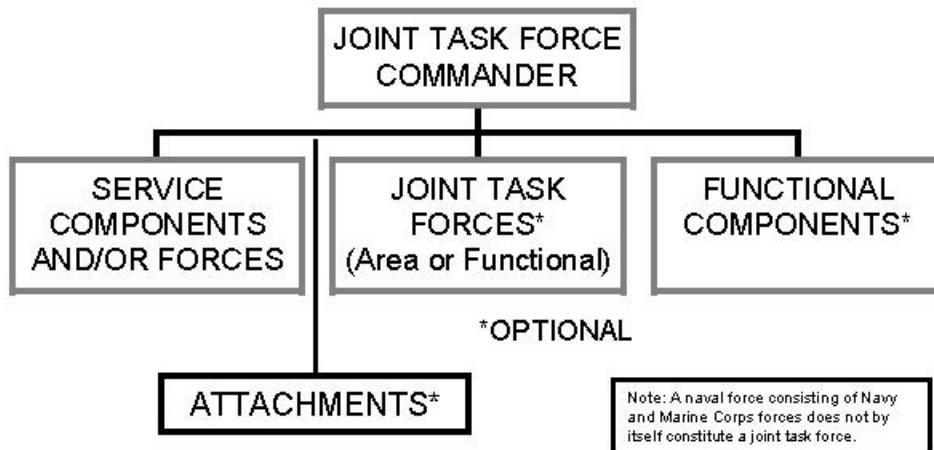
authority when the purpose for which it was created has been achieved or when no longer required.³ The authority establishing a JTF designates the commander and assigns the mission and forces. The commander of a JTF exercises Operational Control (OPCON) over assigned forces and normally over attached forces. JTF commanders are also responsible to the establishing commander for the conduct of the joint training of assigned forces.⁴ Joint Pub 5-00.2 offers a graphical representation of how a JTF is basically formed.⁵

³ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Pub 5-00.2, I-1.

⁴ These key points have been highlighted for purpose of the focus of this paper. For a detailed description of the doctrine and policy of establishing and forming a Joint Task Force, see Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Pub 5-00.2; Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Pub 0-2, Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF) (Washington, DC: GPO, 10 July 2001).

⁵Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Pub 5-00.2, xii.

JOINT TASK FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL OPTIONS



Currently, the United States has a limited number of Standing Joint Task Forces, formed along both functional and geographical basis. Joint Task Force-Bravo (JTF-B), under the combatant command of the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Southern Command, is the headquarters for the command of U.S. forces and exercise activities in Honduras and is responsible for a variety of missions specifically identified for that region.⁶ Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) East, under the combatant command of the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Southern Command; JIATF West, under the combatant command of the

⁶ JTF-B's Home Page, under the keyword "JTF-B," accessed on Google, 16 January 2002.

Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Command; and JTF-6, under the combatant command of the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Joint Forces Command, are all Standing Joint Task Forces that support counter-narcotics missions in assigned geographic areas.⁷ Joint Task Force-Civil Support, is a standing joint task force headquarters under the command of the United States Joint Forces Command and is located at Ft. Monroe, Virginia. It focuses exclusively on providing military support to the lead federal agency during the aftermath of a domestic Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, or high yield Explosive (CBRNE) event.⁸ Joint Task Force-Full Accounting, under the command of Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Command, is charged with achieving "the fullest possible accounting of Americans still missing and unaccounted for as a result of the war in Southeast Asia".⁹ Each of these Standing Joint Task Forces is regionally focused as well.

⁷ USSOUTHCOM's Home Page, under the keyword "USSOUTHCOM," accessed on Google, 16 January 2002; USPACOM's Home Page, under the keyword "PACOM," accessed on Google, 16 January 2002; USJFCOM Home Page, under the keyword "JFCOM", accessed on Google, 16 January 2002.

⁸Major General Bruce M. Lawlor, Commander, Joint Task Force-Civil Support, U. S. Joint Forces Command, "Status Update of JTF-CS," statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee Sub-committee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, Washington, DC, 1 May 2001, URL: < http://www.senate.gov/~armed_services/hearings/2001/e010501.htm >, accessed 16 January 2002.

⁹USPACOM's Home Page, under the keyword "PACOM, accessed on Google, 16 January 2002.

Because of the wide range of operations and environment that the U. S. military may be tasked to operate in, JTFs must demonstrate versatility in their composition. Sizing and makeup of the JTF will be based on numerous factors such as the mission to be performed, time constraints, and location of the mission. Two examples that demonstrate the diversity of missions for which JTFs have been formed are JTF-Provide Relief in Somalia, formed to provide military assistance in support of humanitarian assistance operations and JTF-Noble Anvil, formed to conduct the air campaign in Bosnia. The principle to forming a JTF must be the mission and the main focus for forming a successful JTF is in unity of command and simplicity.¹⁰

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Service aversion to creation of Standing Joint Task Forces dates back to the creation of U.S. Strike Command (STRICOM) in 1961. Formed "to furnish rapidly deployable, combat-ready forces in an emergency situation, calling for response on a scale less than all-out nuclear war"¹¹, STRICOM consisted of the Strategic Army Corps and the US Air Force Tactical Air Command yet failed to include any U.S. Navy or

¹⁰ Briefing Slides 2002 Joint Warfighting Elective, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, "Form the Joint Task Force," 31 January 2002.

¹¹ David Isenberg, "The Rapid Deployment Force: The Few, The Futile, the Expendable," 8 November 1984, CATO Policy Analysis No. 44, URL:

Marine Corps units. In addition to not having naval forces as part of STRICOM, it was further hampered by not actually having the Army and Air Force forces assigned to it on a permanent basis. STRICOM would only have command of its forces during joint training exercises or when conducting actual contingency operations. When STRICOM was originally formed, it was not assigned a specific region or geographical area of responsibility, but was envisioned to reinforce an existing unified commander or act alone if necessary. This deficiency was corrected in 1963 when it was specifically assigned the area of the Middle East and Africa, south of the Sahara (MEAFSA), over the objection of the Navy and Marine Corps, while still retaining the mission of global response. In the end, STRICOM was never utilized nor tasked in any actual contingencies, either in its assigned area of responsibility (AOR) of MEAFSA or other contingencies during its existence such as during the Cuban Missile Crisis, intervention in the Dominican Republic, and during the evacuation of U.S. nationals from the Middle East during the Arab-Israeli War of 1967. The increasing U.S. involvement in the war in Vietnam during this period further strained the ability of STRICOM to attempt to utilize any of the forces it

was suppose to be able to employ in an effective training program. Opportunities that may have existed to train this "joint force" of STRICOM were lost to the current situation of Vietnam. Over time, additional missions and geographical regions were assigned to STRICOM, diffusing its ability to adequately prepare, focus, and source for these missions. Although STRICOM can generally be credited with instituting high-level training between U.S. Army and Air Force units, refining mobility exercises, and evaluating limited joint operational concepts, the omission of naval forces and a strained command structure proved it to be less and less relevant.¹²

In 1971, STRICOM was dissolved and redesignated Readiness Command (REDCOM) in 1972. Like STRICOM,

the primary role of Readiness Command was to provide for a central strategic reserve of land-based general purpose forces to augment any overseas unified or specified command. Unlike STRICOM, REDCOM was not assigned a specific geographical area of responsibility and was not charged with the mission of directing forces in the event of a lesser contingency.¹³

Effectively, the mission of planning and executing military operations in the Middle East, Africa, and Southern Asia (MEAFSA) that STRICOM had but was unable to execute, was

¹² Robert P. Haffa Jr., *The Half War: Planning U.S. Rapid Deployment Forces to Meet a Limited Contingency, 1960-1983* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc., 1984), 93-107; Ronald H. Cole and others, *The History of the Unified Command Plan, 1946-1993* (Washington, DC: Joint History Office, 1995), 32-41.

removed from its role. Its primary role then became that of a "joint" trainer, but still without naval forces. Like STRICOM, REDCOM had no forces assigned to it on a permanent basis. This arrangement effectively left the role of training to the services and REDCOM at the mercy of their cooperation. Although REDCOM did make some limited contributions such as validation of joint doctrine, limited execution of joint training (albeit limited to the Army and Air Force), and planning for the defense of the continental United States, the continued lack of naval forces, no geographical area of responsibility, no assigned forces, and no real perceived mission lead to its disestablishment in 1987.¹⁴

The growing uncertainties in the Arabian Gulf region in the late 1970s and the ineffectiveness of REDCOM lead to the creation of the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF) in 1980. It was "a four-service reservoir of forces suitable and available for use in non-NATO contingencies."¹⁵ Again, forces were not assigned but merely available, creating the same problem of how to train and deploy "service-centric"

¹³Haffa, 107.

¹⁴ Haffa, 107-113.

¹⁵Paul K. Davis, "Observations on the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force: Origins, Directives, and Missions," paper prepared for an address at the 23rd annual convention of the International Studies Association, 24-27 March 1982 (Cincinnati, OH: The Rand Paper Series, The Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, CA, 1982), 1.

forces for a contingency. The most significant addition to the RDJTF that was lacking in the two previous commands was the addition of Navy and Marine Corps forces into the organization. Unlike REDCOM, the RDJTF did have an assigned geographical area of responsibility; that of Southwest Asia. The realization that the RDJTF was formed around a complex and convoluted command structure and lacking assigned forces, yet responsible for a region of growing vital interest to the United States, lead to the decision that the RDJTF should become a unified command. Deactivated on 31 December 1982, its successor, U.S. Central Command was activated on 1 January 1983 thus bringing to close over twenty years of ineffective attempts to form a task force that could respond globally, even with all of the limitations described above.

The common threads that run between these attempts at creating these Standing Joint Task Forces are poorly defined command and control structures, a diffused geographical focus (and in the case of REDCOM, no geographical focus at all), and the requirement to be the strategic reserve. In short, no unity of command, too many missions to train for, and no permanently assigned forces to do an actual mission with.

INSIGHT ON STANDING JOINT TASK FORCES FROM THE 2001

QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW

During the 2001 QDR, the Military Organization and Arrangements Integrated Process Team (MO&A IPT) was specifically tasked by the Secretary of Defense to examine two areas dealing directly with the SJTF concept. Following are the observations of that process.

The MO&A IPT was tasked with determining what training and operational shortfalls would a standing joint force correct compared to current capabilities and initiatives?¹⁶ The MO&A IPT was led by the J-8, Force Structure, Resources, and Assessment Directorate of the Joint Staff. Representatives from all four services, to include the Coast Guard, and representatives from the nine combatant commands participated in this IPT. Through a number of collective meetings, all preceded and followed by brief backs/brief aheads to their respective service chiefs or CINCs (or their appointed general/flag officer representatives) this question was analyzed and answered by all participants. Although there was never unanimity on all of the answers (remember they were dealing with senior general/flag officers) what essentially came out was that command and control,

¹⁶Briefing Slide 2001 Military Organization and Arrangement Integrated Process Team as part of the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review, 2 July 2001.

interoperability, and senior leader training currently negatively effects responsiveness and early effectiveness of a Joint Task Force. Specific areas that could possibly be improved through creation of a SJTF were:

- **Logistics Interoperability** - By having a SJTF, logistics would have to be streamlined in order to support the force on a daily basis, thereby establishing effective linked systems to track each of the services requirements. This was seen as initially applicable only to the SJTF but eventually to the Department of Defense as a whole through capitalization on lessons learned and development of future compatible joint systems of equipment.
- **Joint Commander and Staff Training** - A dedicated and cohesive headquarters staff that could train as it would fight.
- **Seamless Command & Control** - This included both communications interoperability throughout the SJTF and a clearly defined command relationship. In order for a SJTF to operate, a common (and funded) command and control (C2) system would have to be developed and implemented. Again, this would prove beneficial to the Defense Department in the out years through capitalization on lessons learned and development of future compatible joint systems of equipment.

- **Training in and Baseline Standards for Joint Critical Competencies** – Specifically identified were planning; Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR); fires; and logistics. Linked to improved Joint Commander and Staff Training, these functions were identified as the most critical for the SJTF to focus on. In addition to the SJTF staff improving in these areas, the SJTF would improve as a whole through common training applied to the force.

In conjunction with the above mission, the MO&A IPT was also tasked with determining what are the advantages and disadvantages of Standing Joint Force options to rapidly and decisively respond to crises across the full range of military operations.¹⁷ Five options for a SJTF were developed, ranging from a co-located, continental United States (CONUS) based force with dedicated forces; a linked, CONUS based force, utilizing a rotational force; to a CINC based, world-wide based force, utilizing a synchronized rotational base of forces. The decision to use different options vice selecting one was to provide the senior leadership a more thorough list of advantages and disadvantages considering the complexity involved in creating

¹⁷Briefing Slide 2001 Military Organization and Arrangement Integrated Process Team as part of the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review, 2 July 2001.

a SJTF to respond globally and across the spectrum of conflict.

- **Advantages:**

Three advantages were identified by the IPT if a SJTF was formed. First, through an existing command and control structure and established command relationships, headquarters responsiveness and early effectiveness to an emerging crisis would be improved. There would not be a need to form a JTF if one already existed, thereby allowing the CJTF to immediately begin preparing for the mission. Second, joint force habitual relationships would improve interoperability throughout the force and eventually throughout the Department of Defense. Finally, it was determined that there would be an increase in battlefield synergy created from the habitual relationships of the joint force or through a workup and certification for the joint pool of forces (required in the CINC based, world-wide based force, utilizing a synchronized rotational base of forces).

- **Disadvantages**

Disadvantages with creation of a SJTF far outnumbered the advantages. The disadvantages were broken down by four categories, each category containing at least one, and in most cases multiple options of the five options evaluated. They are 1) Dedicated forces assigned to the SJTF, 2) One

SJTF formed for global response, 3) Forces co-located with the SJTF, and 4) CINC based, world-wide based force, utilizing a synchronized rotational base of forces. In examining the way forces are currently deployed, it was determined that a common disadvantage to all of the options was that a SJTF had the potential to reduce the immediately employable in-theater responsiveness of some services, specifically the Navy/Marine Corps team, if the SJTF requirements were found to impact the current forward posture of forces.

In the options where *dedicated forces* were assigned to the JTF and assuming current force structure and operational requirements, it was determined that this option would break or severely strain all services rotational force management and readiness programs. Additionally, this option would put even more strains on the already overtaxed Low Density/High Demand (LD/HD) assets that would have to be apportioned to this force. Because of the global focus and requirement to respond across the spectrum of conflict, this force would possess only shallow operational depth and inhibit fundamental skill training across the force. When dedicated forces were added to the option of four standing Joint Forces with sufficient capability to respond in each AOR, it was clear that this would consume most, if not all, of the

military's resources and essentially eliminate the pool of forces for any other requirements. If rotational forces were used, it was determined that this option would either reduce the rotational forces available for overseas operations or it would require a significant increase to the total force structure.

In the options when only *one SJTF* is formed to be able to respond globally, the advantages of regional expertise and specialization that currently exists is lost to this force. Without this regional focus, it would be difficult to define and tailor the SJTF to meet all of the CINCs requirements. Additionally, this option determined that there existed the strong possibility that there would be limited to no habitual training relationships between CINCs and the SJTF, to include both the headquarters element and assigned forces. This clearly would lead to operational coordination challenges at the time of employment of the SJTF in a CINCs area of responsibility. Lastly, globally focused SJTF would not have established an effective understanding and working relationship with regional coalition partners as they would not have had an opportunity to train as frequently with them as is currently done.

In the options when forces of the SJTF are *co-located*, substantial impacts on infrastructure, ranges, environmental

issues, and personnel relocation were so significant that costs could not even begin to be calculated in the limited time available to the IPT. The cost prohibition aside, the requirement for adequate facilities to support the scope of co-located SJTF would be difficult to locate.

In the option of a CINC based, world-wide based force, utilizing a synchronized rotational base of forces it was envisioned that there would be an additional burden on rotational forces to conduct certification exercise to meet the CINCs requirements. Finally, the Global Military Force Positioning and Response Policy (GMFPRP) would prove to be extremely complex, possibly unworkable given the level of engagement and combination of forward presence, rotational base, and service core competency requirements that the force currently encounters.

These findings were briefed to the Senior Level Review Group (SLRG), consisting of the service chiefs, CJCS, and the Deputy Secretary of Defense, during mid July 2001. Based on the unacceptable costs in personnel, equipment, and infrastructure, and the overwhelming disadvantages associated with the SJTF options it was recommended to the Secretary of Defense by the SLRG that the creation of a SJTF simply did not justify any potential benefits. The advantages identified with a SJTF could be assumed as easily with a

SJTfhQ (improved headquarters responsiveness and early effectiveness) or limited in actual application (at the JTF level would habitual relations with assigned forces really provide the battlefield synergy without actual training/employment opportunities). The majority of the disadvantages associated with the creation of a SJTF would not be encountered through development of a SJTFhQ. The collective recommendation of the service chiefs, to include input from the CINCs, was that the Department of Defense continues experimentation and development of a SJTFhQ. They proposed looking at a hybrid of JFCOMs JTfhQ-X core element model and PACOM/CENTCOMs component-based, task organized model. Additionally, they indicated that joint training could be enhanced through a more effective scheduling effort with a focus on enabling synergistic joint relations and improving interoperability across the joint force.

STANDING JOINT TASK FORCE OR STANDING JOINT TASK FORCE

HEADQUARTERS

In a study conducted by the Center for Naval Analysis in 1994 on JTF operations conducted between 1983 and 1994, it is shown that nearly half (10 of the 23 operations studied) were conducted on extremely short notice. "[T]he CJTF and his staff had less than 72 hours' notice to plan and prepare for

execution."¹⁸ This trend will most likely continue in the future as the environment within which the United States operates in continues to become more compressed. Two other areas that the study highlighted were that during an emerging crisis, there were "difficulties in assembling a joint staff"¹⁹ and a "lack of established relationships"²⁰ that hampered the ability of the JTF to effect coordination and begin the planning process. With an established SJTFHQ, these noted difficulties could be significantly reduced through a cohesive staff already formed and prepared to conduct mission planning, thereby allowing the JTF to respond more rapidly.

The creation of a Standing Joint Task Force, as outlined in the 2001 QDR, to accomplish some mission, be it small or large, leads one to question, "What is the Mission?" What are we creating this force for? Unfortunately, the 2001 QDR does not clearly identify it. The QDR states that

the Department will examine options for establishing Standing Joint Task Forces (SJTFs). SJTF organizations will focus in particular on the critical operational goals described previously. They will seek to develop new concepts to exploit U.S. asymmetric military advantages and joint force synergies. These concepts will be designed to take into account the

¹⁸Center for Naval Analyses, *JTF Operations Since 1983*, Study, CRM 94-42, July 1994, 14.

¹⁹Center for Naval Analyses, 15.

²⁰Center for Naval Analyses, 11.

potential to achieve significantly greater military capability at lower total personnel costs.²¹

In summary, these operational goals, which in turn become the "mission" for these proposed SJTFs to focus on are broad in geographical focus, potential adversary capabilities, and involve examining a host of emerging technologies not all specifically military in nature. The report is correct in identifying the plurality of establishing SJTFs. It would be inconceivable to expect that even an experimental program could adequately focus on the range of transformational goals outlined in the report. These goals need the collective focus of the Department of Defense, under the direction of CINCJFCOM, in identifying what military capabilities need to be applied to them to maintain superiority in the 21st Century. Unfortunately, it seems that the Department of Defense has failed to look at the examples of creating a separate force with obscured missions and questionable resources.

Although the combatant commanders in chiefs (CINCs) influences and powers have increased, they are still constrained by the limitations of resources in the planning and execution of their assigned missions. Some of the CINCs

²¹U.S. Department of Defense, *2001 Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, n.p., 30 September 2001, 34. For a detailed description of the six critical

have minimal forces assigned and some forces are dual apportioned, supporting more than one CINC. This arrangement reflects the limitations of personnel and equipment within the U.S. military to actually be dedicated on a full time basis to one CINC. Realizing that the United States must have a global focus in its strategic planning, these CINCs are responsible for assigned geographical areas and are intimately involved in development of their Theater Engagement Plans, Operation Plan development, and politico-military involvement within their regions, to name but a few of their responsibilities. This arrangement allows for a more narrowly defined focus of effort and ability to respond rapidly in the event of a crisis within a CINCs AOR. To think that a single entity, such as a "Super CINC" could devote the attention and resources to a global view of the world is extremely questionable. Why then, would we want to create a Standing Joint Task Force that would have to train, equip, and maintain itself to respond to a crisis somewhere in the world? There are just too many variables to contend with. These variables include vastly different country and regional ideologies, economies, and political goals; transnational commerce, terrorism, drug-trafficking, and

operational goals that focus DOD's transformation see page 30 of the report.

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) proliferation; and increasing regional competitors coupled with regional instability throughout the world. Therefore then, the concept of regional CINCs remains valid and that forces must be assigned or apportioned to support the CINCs requirements as well.

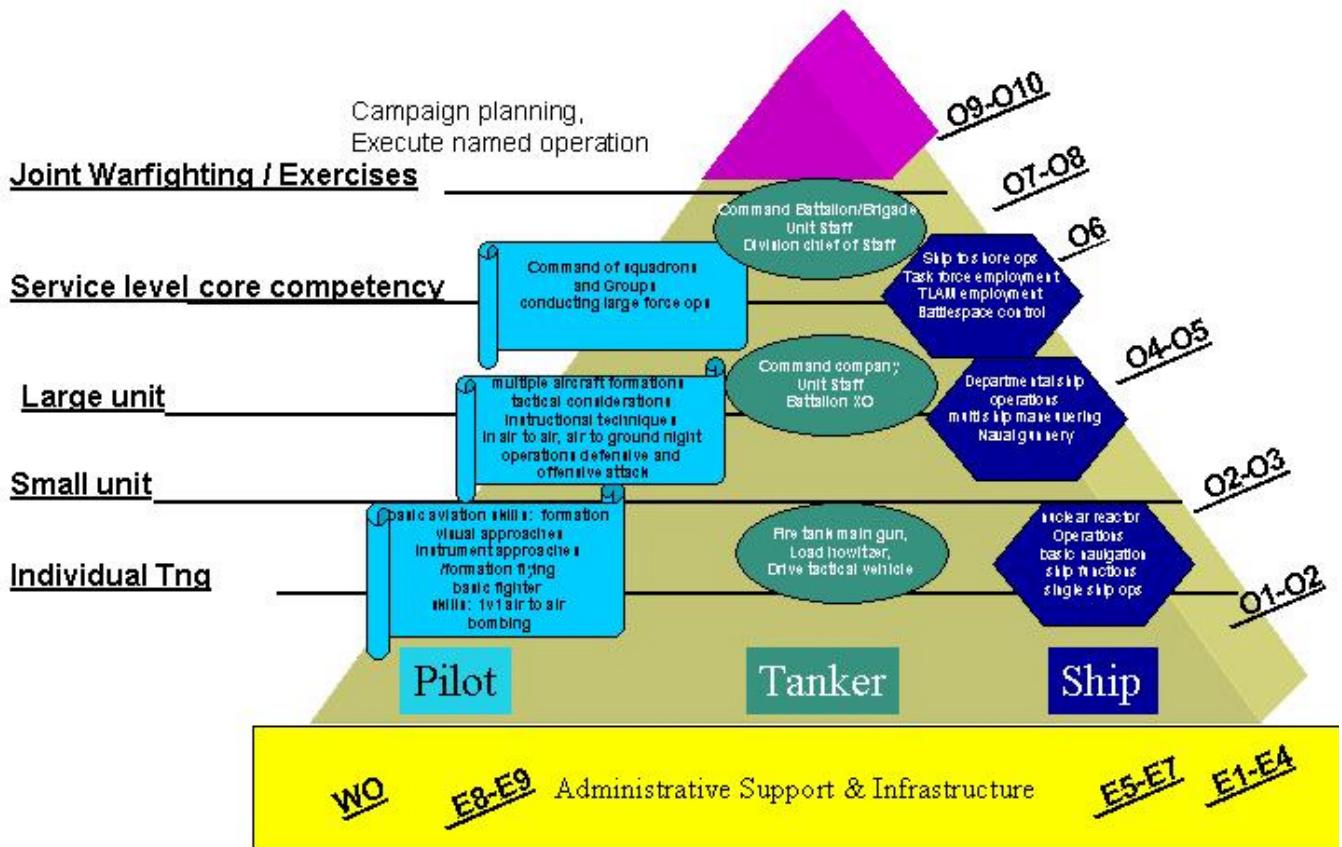
Obviously, the ideal situation would be to develop a SJTF for each of the CINCs and provide it with all of the resources required to accomplish its tasks. As was identified by the MO&A IPT, however, the reality is that this cannot happen. As described earlier, there are an unbounded amount of possible situations that the United States may be required to respond to in order to maintain the freedoms that we have and wish to foster. Those, coupled with the limitations of resources, create the reality that we will not have the luxury to dedicate forces to every CINC. Instead, we must prepare for uncertainties and, when needed, allocate trained forces to the main effort.

In order for an organization to be effective it must train together. Although DOD has come a long way in the development of Joint Doctrine, the fact remains that the functions that a service performs require a large amount of training at the small unit level. Currently, the responsibility to train its members falls on the service

chiefs through Title X responsibilities. Fighting the "joint fight" is more than having the right organization or collection of forces. It involves having units that are trained in the basics of their profession, be it combat or humanitarian missions. Would the Joint Force Commander of a SJTF be able to establish an effective joint training program that covers all of those requirements? The answer of course is "NO". Services will still be required to train their forces to perform their tasks. By looking at the strategic environment and determining what capabilities the enemy may possess, the Department of Defense, through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and the CINCs, must be instrumental in establishing the requirements for the individual services to train to. With an overarching umbrella of joint training requirements, the service chiefs can focus on producing the most combat ready force available. What a Joint Force Commander must be able to do is employ the joint force; that force that has been trained to standards by its individual services. The figure below shows that the preponderance of the force is made up of those personnel that must perform specific tasks in order to accomplish a mission.²²

²² Briefing Slide 2001 Military Organization and Arrangement Integrated Process Team as part of the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review, 2 July 2001.

Training Hierarchy



What the Joint Force Commander needs to effectively and efficiently employ his joint forces is but a smaller portion of experienced personnel.

This is not to say, however, that training of the joint force is not required. As stated earlier, in order for an organization to function properly, it must train together. Provided a focused mission for a regional SJTFHQ and a demanding and evaluated joint training program within the services, JTF level exercises could be conducted to test the

joint inter-operability of the force. Effective scheduling of these JTF level exercises must be accomplished so as to not overtax the force and degrade the ability to train to core competencies. As history has shown though, the competing demands placed on the services to conduct joint training exercises in addition to their own training requirements will continue to stress the relationship between the Joint Force Commander and the service components.

Just as training is important for the forces as a whole, it is arguably more so for the headquarters, especially at the joint force level. Under the current system of using an assigned component headquarters as the nucleus for a JTFHQ, component headquarters must split their training between their role as component headquarters and their possible role as a JTFHQ. What is quite often lacking from the JTFHQ focused training is the incorporation of significant and viable representation from sister services and other functional specialists not resident within a service component headquarters. The in-depth understandings of other service capabilities are quite often not available and are therefore not incorporated in the exercising of the JTFHQ. More importantly, the team-building training that is required to operate an efficient JTFHQ, consisting of "requisite expertise and equipment to deal with the expanded joint

nature of warfare" is also lost.²³ While a service component headquarters may be a cohesive unit, once it becomes a JTFHQ, augmented with representatives from throughout the Defense Department, it losses some of that cohesiveness. All too often, once an exercise is over, the "JTFHQ" is disbanded and gains made are soon lost.

If a SJTF is formed, who has the responsibility for equipping it? Currently, the service chiefs are responsible for equipping their respective services. The creation of a SJTF with permanently assigned forces may require the services to procure equipment that is redundant or irrelevant to that service. With creation of regionally focused SJTFHQs, apportioned forces would come with existing equipment. The service chiefs would still maintain this responsibility as long as the equipment they are procuring truly fits into the operational requirements of the Department as a whole. Again, by looking at the strategic environment and determining what capabilities the enemy may possess, the Department of Defense, through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and the CINCs, can be instrumental in establishing the equipment requirements for the individual services. With an overarching umbrella of

²³Colonel J.E. Toth, USMC, *Strategy, Rapid Deployment, and the Fleet Marine Force*, unpublished Advanced Amphibious Study Group Concept Paper, located

joint equipment procurement standards, the service chiefs can focus on producing equipment that serves both the service and the Joint Force Commander. Equipment specific to the SJTFHQ, such as command and control assets, should be the responsibility of the SJTFHQ. Additionally, theater ISR assets should be the sole responsibility of combatant commanders, as this would reduce the problems of incompatibility of these assets across service lines. These initiatives would require changes to Title X responsibilities but are necessary.

The Title X responsibility of maintaining of equipment and personnel is also a responsibility assigned to the service chiefs that should remain with them. As has been noted, the feasibility of dedicating specific units and their associated equipment to a SJTF is questionable. With the responsibility to train and equip their respective services to perform functions in a joint environment, the preponderance of training will take place under the auspices of service related training. Provisions should be established however, to adequately fund the services when they conduct joint training or joint operations.

With the direction to "streamline the overhead structure and flatten the organization",²⁴ the report specifically identifies that the Department of Defense will reduce all of its headquarters staffs by 15 percent. It is implied that the gains achieved through these reductions will be applied to the creation of the regionally focused SJTFHQs directed in the QDR. The creation of SJTFs will add yet more personnel requirements with no planned increases in force end-strength. According to Dr. Robert Worley,

[e]ach Service has personnel end-strength limits and is stretched thin as the Defense drawdown continues. The last several years have witnessed a proliferation of joint commands and an attendant increase in joint staff billets. The Services have increasingly complained about staffing joint organizations rather than staffing their own Service organizations. The inability to complete the staff of Camp Lejeune's standing JTF headquarters is due primarily to this problem. Congress has closely monitored and regulated the number of joint staff billets and has set upper bounds.²⁵

In today's complex global strategic environment, other elements of national power will always be involved in the use of military force, preferably before that use. Using the option outlined in the QDR for a SJTF to conduct an "unwarned, extended range conventional attack against fixed

²⁴ Department of Defense, 52.

²⁵ D. Robert Whorley, *Challenges to Train, Organize, and Equip the Complete Combined Arms Team: The Joint Task Force*, IDA Paper p-3431, n.p., September 1998, 19.

and mobile targets at varying depths"²⁶ one can see that the military solution is not the only answer. The question must be asked "Who identified the targets to be tracked"? Certainly some direction from the government, such as the State Department or Justice Department has identified an area or individual that they are concerned about and have directed it to be monitored more closely. To think that the United States, yet alone the Department of Defense, can continuously monitor every potential adversary, predict his next move, and preempt him is unthinkable given the limitations of our current Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance assets. The establishment of a Standing Joint Task Force will not solve the problem of this limitation. Again, limited resources will require a focus of effort, to include the focus of our ISR assets as determined by the president. That is, and should remain, the CINCs responsibility, in concert with the State Department and other intelligence gathering agencies throughout the government.

More realistic is the scenario that through effective inter-agency cooperation and regional focus, priorities can be placed on an emerging threat or crisis and collection can hopefully be increased. If the collection works and the United States has the opportunity to conduct an unwarned

²⁶ Department of Defense, 34.

strike, the president will direct that to happen. If it is going to be an unwarned attack, one can assume that it will be delivered through long-range, precision munitions. The ability to conduct such strikes already exists through either individual service action or a combination of services. If the strike is successful, there will be no need for a Joint Task Force. In the event the strike is unsuccessful, there exists the potential for an entirely different type of response. Will we have a Standing Joint Task Force for that as well? At that point the mission will have to be analyzed and the appropriate JTF will be formed. In reality, this has already been going on and options are being formulated, if not already finalized. What becomes critical is that the JTF is formed around a working and functional trained SJTFHQs that has examined the region in detail and has developed those critical inter-agency working relations mentioned above. Through focused planning, this integrated SJTFHQ will be able to task organize a tailored JTF to execute the mission in a more rapid manner.

In a Government Accounting Office (GAO) report to the Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Defense, it was noted that DOD currently has limited ability to rapidly identify and strike time-critical targets. It supports this statement by reporting that there are currently in excess of 100 C4ISR

systems throughout DOD and other government agencies that are required to identify and attack targets and a good portion of them are incompatible with each other. Formation of a Standing Joint Task Force will not necessarily remedy this problem as some of these assets belong to other government intelligence collection agencies not within DOD. More control must be placed on DOD and service acquisition of C4ISR assets, to include all of the government intelligence collection agencies. Holding the services accountable for development of truly joint compatible C4ISR systems, through the Joint Requirements Oversight Committee (JROC) and the Joint Interoperability Test Command (JITC) is the critical step here. The GAO report noted the deficiencies of both of these organizations as well, making this a difficult obstacle to overcome considering their poor past record of taking the hard line on ensuring the right systems are acquired for the good of the joint community over the desires of the services.²⁷

The current Global War on Terrorism, and more specifically, Operation Enduring Freedom in and around Afghanistan, suggest that we may not be as broken as critics

²⁷Director Acquisition and Sourcing Management, United States General Accounting Office, letter to Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, GAO-02-204R, subject: "Joint Warfighting: Attacking Time-Critical Targets," 30 November 2001, URL: <<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d02204r.pdf>>, accessed on 16 January 2002.

have lead us to believe in decreasing the sensor to shooter time delays. Use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) such as the Predator and Global Hawk to locate and attack time critical targets has shown that we have the technology and command and control for these types of attacks. What is important to note is that these actions are taking place in an area of identified interest. Even with intensive efforts to establish clear situational awareness in this area, locating specific targets is difficult at best. On the other hand, once a target is located, it has been proven that mobile targets can be attacked rapidly, given that there are assets available. Another important factor is that the personnel controlling the actual attack have been given permission to attack these time critical targets.

Specifically, through the will of the American people, our elected and senior government leadership have already established the "rules of engagement" that allows these types of time-critical attacks against high value targets to happen. Will a SJTF, such as envisioned in the QDR, have this strong official backing and will there be a rapid decision making process within the highest levels of our government to capitalize on this capability that is envisioned with the SJTF?

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

The poorly defined concept presented in the QDR report for the establishment of SJTFs is just the beginning of the problems associated with creating a SJTF. The mission described in the QDR to conduct an unwarned attack against targets in itself does not warrant the creation of a SJTF. Fixing the incompatibility problem, across all levels of the government, associated with our current ISR assets must first take place. With that limitation removed, current weapons systems are already in place to accomplish a conventional unwarned attack. Nor does the creation of a SJTF provide the United States with any greater capability to conduct an unwarned attack with air, naval, and ground forces than we currently possess. Forces are already identified and available to conduct short notice operations. Two factors currently limit their ability to employ any faster than they currently have. First being the decision making process at the highest levels of our government to commit these forces. The second factor is the availability and limitations of strategic lift. The size of the force, be it a SJTF or a JTF formed to accomplish an unwarned attack will be limited to the strategic lift that our nation currently possesses. Therefore, utilizing the scenario laid out in the QDR, it is

clear that the requirement for a JTF to have a viable mission to train for is clearly missed.

Currently, the options available to create a SJTF are not feasible considering the tremendous costs in both personnel and dollars, potential degradation of service core competencies, predicted increases in operational tempo and personnel tempo, and an overall detrimental impact to the total force. It is clearly an inefficient use of our limited resources. These findings, as identified during the QDR, coupled with the requirement for a global focus versus a regional focus for a SJTF, reduce the employability of this proposed force, and do not justify the creation of this type of SJTF.

Instead, effort must be placed on the creation of viable and cohesive, regionally focus Standing Joint Task Force Headquarters for each of the CINCs, to achieve the operational synergies envisioned in the QDR. JFCOM's recent progress in moving its JTFHQ-X from the concept phase to the experimentation phase is clearly a step in the right direction. Additionally, any increases gained from the reduction of existing headquarters must be applied to these future regionally focused SJTFHQs in order for them to be able to eliminate the current deficiencies noted in forming a JTF as a crisis emerges.

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